

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

C/K-H-575a7

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February 8, 1971

National Security Decision Memorandum 97

TO: The Members of the National Security Council
The Attorney General
The Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Safeguard Review

nsc/nss, DOS, OSD
Reviews Completed

As a result of the review of the Safeguard program conducted by the National Security Council I have decided, on the following Safeguard Program subject to Congressional authorization where required:

1. Continue construction at the sites at Grand Forks, North Dakota and Malmstrom, Montana.
2. Commence (in 1971) the construction already authorized for the site at Whiteman, Missouri.
3. Begin (in 1972) advance preparation on the National Command Authority defense at Washington, D. C. or construction on the site at Warren, Wyoming. I will decide between these alternatives based upon a review of developments in SALT.

To insure a clear and coherent presentation of my decision in connection with the budget I direct that an interagency coordinating committee be formed under the direction of a representative of the Secretary of Defense with membership composed of representatives from appropriate agencies and appropriate elements of the Executive Office of the President.



cc: The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Senior Members, U.S. Delegation
to the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks

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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN... *1*

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ACTION

February 3, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *K*

SUBJECT: Safeguard Review

Your decision is now needed on the options for proceeding with the Safeguard Program which were outlined in the NSC meeting on Wednesday, January 27.

While Safeguard funds are included in budget documents in only the most general ways, it is important to obtain a decision and formulate our rationale prior to the appearance of Secretaries Laird and Rogers before Congress to defend the budget.

The Options discussed at the NSC Meeting were:

Option 1:

Continue construction on the existing two sites and begin construction already authorized for Whiteman. Additionally, request authorization for construction at the Warren site and for advance preparation for Washington, D.C.

This is the program proposed by Secretary Laird.

Option 2:

Continue construction at the existing two sites and begin construction already authorized for Whiteman. Additionally, request authorization either for construction at the Warren site or for advance preparation for the NCA defense at Washington, D.C., depending upon progress at SALT.

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This program is supported by Director Shultz and would probably be acceptable to Secretary Laird. This option appears close to my understanding of Secretary Rogers' position.

Option 3:

Continue construction at the existing two sites and begin construction already authorized for Whiteman. Additionally, request authorization for advance preparation for the NCA defense at Washington, D. C. Do not request construction authorization for Warren.

There are no open advocates for this program, although Ambassador Smith would probably prefer, for negotiating reasons, this program to Option 1 or Option 2.

Option 4:

Continue only minimal construction on the two existing sites but defer the authorized construction at Whiteman. Additionally, request authorization for advance preparation for the NCA defense at Washington, D. C. Do not request construction authorization for Warren.

This program is proposed by Ambassador Smith and would probably be acceptable to Secretary Rogers.

It is generally agreed that we should request authorization for advance preparation for the NCA defense. This should enable us, if we make the proper effort, to determine whether we can get Congressional support for NCA and relates our Safeguard proposal to our SALT position.

As discussed in the NSC meeting, the decision as to the amount of construction undertaken turns principally on judgments concerning Congressional attitudes and Soviet reactions to our moves during SALT.

The arguments concerning negotiations are summarized as follows:

-- On one hand, it is argued that the Soviets may be concerned about the irreversibility and expandability of our Safeguard program, that they may have given a signal of restraint in the slowdown of SS-9 deployments, and that we should return a strong signal by slowing our ABM program.

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-- On the other hand, it is argued that if the Soviets are concerned about irreversibility, they should be more inclined to negotiate at Vienna, that the SS-9 slowdown is not unambiguous, and that if we slow our ABM program without specific progress in SALT, they are encouraged not to reach an agreement.

The arguments concerning Congressional reaction are summarized as follows:

-- On one hand, it is argued that the less we ask for in Safeguard the less opposition we are likely to get in the Congress. Moreover, the opposition is likely to use the apparent SS-9 slowdown and the Soviet ABM-only proposal as arguments to defeat our proposals. If our proposal is defeated in Congress, we will have lost, rather than maintained, leverage in SALT.

-- On the other hand, it is argued that slowing Safeguard now will encourage even more opposition and that we would be unlikely to ever revive any ABM even in the absence of a SALT agreement. Moreover, asking for a reduced level of construction denies our "bargaining chip" arguments of last year unless we turn to the ambiguous SS-9 events for justification, a questionable course, unless we also get some constraint on Soviet offensive systems.

My Recommendation

On balance, I think the most prudent course is to approve Option 2, which involves continuing construction at the two existing sites; initiating construction at Whiteman; requesting authorization either for construction at Warren or for advance preparation of the NCA defense at your discretion based on our progress in SALT.

This program would give an appropriate signal to the Soviets and relates our Safeguard program to SALT without sacrificing the impetus of the program or encouraging the Soviets to talk rather than to negotiate.

We would face more opposition in the Congress with this option than with Ambassador Smith's proposal. However, this is unavoidable. The alternative would be to risk weakening our principal bargaining card in SALT without getting limits on Soviet

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forces. One important aspect of proposing NCA or Warren is that it gives you a rationale, should you feel it prudent to do so, to withdraw the request for Warren before a Congressional vote, giving you important flexibility in working with the Congress.

You will note that I have not mentioned Gerry Smith's proposal for unilateral declaration stopping Safeguard as long as the Soviets stop offensive deployments. I think this is an important option but it needs more analysis and you can take that action at any time. I will send you a separate memorandum concerning this matter.

Finally, I recommend you direct the establishment of an inter-agency coordinating committee to prepare the legislation and rationale for our Safeguard program. This is essential to insure the Government speaks with a single voice on this issue.

Attached is a NSDM (Tab A) reflecting the above considerations. If you approve, please sign the NSDM.

Approved; issue the NSDM 

Disapproved; see me for guidance _____

Attachment

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